

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 053188

62

ORIGIN AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 IO-12 ADP-00 SS-14 NSC-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-09 NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-12

PRS-01 INRE-00 /116 R

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NEA/ P - MR. BRIGGS

AF/ N - MR. BLAKE

S/ PRS - MR. BRAY

----- 128150

P 222215 Z MAR 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL ORAN

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

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PAGE 02 STATE 053188

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
USINT ALGIERS
AMCONSUL TANGIERS

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BEIRUT ALSO POUCH BAGHDAD AND SANAA

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR LY PBOR

SUBJECT: EXCERPTS OF TRANSCRIPT, PRESS NEWS BRIEFING TODAY

Q. CHARLES, WHAT'S NEW ON THE AERIAL INCIDENT OF THE
MEDITERRANEAN YESTERDAY?

A. I THINK IT'S PROBABLY ACCURATE TO SAY THAT THE ONLY
THING THAT'S NEW, NICK, IS THIS MORNING, TRIPOLI TIME,
OUR CHARGE D'AFFAIRES DELIVERED TO THE LIBYAN FOREIGN
MINISTRY THE NOTE OF PROTEST AND REQUEST FOR AN
INVESTIGATION OF AND ACCOUNTING FOR THIS INCIDENT WHICH
I PREFIGURED FOR YOU YESTERDAY AFTERNOON. THERE WAS NO
IMMEDIATE RESPONSE, BEYOND AN UNDERTAKING ON THE PART OF
THE LIBYAN FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL TO CONVEY THIS PRO-
TEST AND REQUEST TO THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES.

Q. WELL, CHARLES, I WONDER IF YOU WOULD TELL US WHAT THIS
DOES FOR U. S.- LIBYAN RELATIONS IN THE MEANTIME?

A. NO. PERSONALLY, NO.

Q. HOW ABOUT THE U. S. SEARCH FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST,
IN MORE GENERAL TERMS? DOES THIS HAVE ANY EFFECT ON THAT?

A. THERE'S NO REASON WHY IT SHOULD.

Q. CHARLES, WHEN YOU SAY PRESUMABLY BY NOW THE PILOTS
OF THE C-130 HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO BE DEBRIEFED, CAN YOU
SAY ANYTHING MORE ABOUT EITHER THE DETAILS OF THE
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PAGE 03 STATE 053188

INCIDENT THAT HAVE NOT YET BEEN DISCLOSED OR WHETHER

NOW THE DEPARTMENT RELATES THIS IN ANY WAY TO THE
DOWNING OF THE LIBYAN PASSENGER JET BY ISREAL?

A. I THINK FROM THIS POINT ONWARD THAT THE DEPARTMENT
OF DEFENSE PROBABLY SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DEBRIEFING
ON A MILITARY MISSION.

Q. CAN WE RELATE THIS IN ANY WAY TO THE DOWNING OF A
LIBYAN PASSENGER --

A. I DON' T KNOW THAT WE CAN DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS OF ANY
KIND, JOHN -- AS I SAID YESTERDAY AFTERNOON -- UNTIL WE
HAVE SOME FORM OF RESPONSE FROM THE LIBYAN GOVERNMENT,
WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT SPEAK TO THE MOTIVATION.

NOW, THERE WAS A QUESTION YESTERDAY TO WHICH I SAID I
DIDN' T KNOW THE ANSWER; AND THAT WAS THE CLOSEST POINT
OF APPROACH OF THIS AIRCRAFT TO THE LIBYAN COASTLINE.
AND I AM TOLD THAT AT NO POINT WAS THIS AIRCRAFT
CLOSER TO LIBYAN SOIL THAN 75 MILES.

THE INCIDENT ITSELF I MAY HAVE BEEN OFF BY A MILE
YESTERDAY-- APPEARS TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE AT 82 MILES OUT.

Q. WHAT TERRITORIAL WATERS ARE CLAIMED BY LIBYA?

A. WHETHER IT' S 3 OR 12, THERE SIMPLY CAN BE NO DOUBT
THAT THIS AIRCRAFT -- AS I SAID YESTERDAY, WAS WELL
OUT OVER INTERNATIONAL WATERS AND IN INTERNATIONAL AIR-
SPACE.

A. FOR THE MOMENT I REFUSE TO CREDIT THE POSSIBILITY
OF THE LIBYAN' S CLAIM OF A 75 MILE --

A. TERRITORIAL WATER. BUT I' LL GET THE FIGURE. I DON' T
KNOW IF IT' S 3 OR 12.

A. WE RECOGNIZE 3 MILES, IN ANY EVENT.

Q. HOW CLOSE DID THE AMERICAN AIRPLANE GO TO THE
LIBYAN COAST?
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PAGE 04 STATE 053188

A. 75 MILES.

A. CHARLES, WASN' T THIS PLANE ON INCREASED RECONNAISSANCE
FLIGHTS AS A RESULT OF INDICATIONS THAT LIBYAN AIRCRAFT,

MILITARY AIRCRAFT, WERE EXTENDING FARTHER OUT INTO THE
MEDITERRANEAN IN SEARCH OF ISRAELI AIRLINERS?

A. GEORGE, I WAS ASKED YESTERDAY AFTERNOON WHETHER WE
COULD CREDIT ACCOUNTS F
E E E E E E E

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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To: AMMAN
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